

## **Carlisle Housing Authority**

February 9, 2012

Submitted by Carolyn Ing

Meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm.

Present: Alan Lehotsky (Chair), W. Randall Brown, Carolyn Ing, Stephen Pearlman, Elizabeth DeMille Barnett (Housing Coordinator).

Community input: none.

### **Old business**

**NOAH Benfield Farms update:** Ann Hartstein, Secretary, Executive Office of Elder Affairs, has written a letter of support for the NOAH Benfield Farms senior housing project to Aaron Gorenstein, the new Undersecretary of the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Mrs. Barnett also has continued to support NOAH and its subconsultant LDS Associates, in the updating of the Benfield Farms marketing analysis. This work is one of the many components needed in preparation for the February 10<sup>th</sup> DHCD One-Stop Application.

In other news, Benfield Farms is cited on the Community Preservation Coalition website as a success story for a Community Preservation Act funded mixed-used project. Mrs. Barnett also was interviewed for the Community Preservation Act newsletter where she discussed her work as a Housing Coordinator.

Due to an uptick in Benfield property use, the Carlisle Trails committee has requested to place a sign on the property marking the Benfield land. The proposed sign will be similar to other trail signs in town, and will read Benfield Land, Town of Carlisle. On a motion made by Steven Pearlman and seconded by W. Randall Brown, the board voted 4-0 to approve the sign.

Mrs. Barnett shared that NOAH is interested in beginning preliminary work on the Benfield Farms public water supply well.

**Highland Building update:** On February 14 at 8:30 p.m, the Highland Building Committee is scheduled to report their findings to the Board of Selectmen. Alan Lehotsky will attend on behalf of the Housing Authority to share its perspective on the value of an affordable housing Highland School Building re-use option. One of the his key points is that the Housing Authority's proposed affordable housing use is the sole option that will require neither a Town expenditure for an initial capital investment nor for ongoing operations costs.

**Community Preservation application for Conant land, Cranberry Bog (map 28-8-10A) and Town Forest site evaluations:** The Community Preservation Committee funding application for Fiscal Year 2013 was filed on time by Mrs. Barnett. The cost estimates she used to complete the application were developed by contacting three engineering firms. The Housing Authority's next step will be to come before the Conservation Commission to discuss this proposed work and any required access authorizations.

**Banta-Davis Task Force:** Mr. Brown discussed his presentation of the public access Massachusetts GIS data. Mrs. Barnett added that the group is in the process of identifying questions which would determine affordable housing development feasibility and is moving along on an accelerated schedule. The next Banta Davis Task Force meeting is February 27.

#### **New business**

**Greater Lowell Habitat for Humanity:** Jim Saltonstall, Chairman of the Greater Lowell Habitat for Humanity Board and Carlisle resident, and Brenda Gould, Interim Executive Director, Habitat for Humanity and Westford resident, spoke to the board about their organization's Carlisle activity and local programs. They shared that 15 houses have been built in the greater Lowell area, including a house in Concord built in late '90s. An 8-unit home-ownership project, including one unit with modifications for accessibility, is currently under construction in Bedford.

Habitat for Humanity programs other than building affordable homes include a joint Home Depot-Habitat for Humanity pilot program for veterans, which provides discounted materials and labor for critical home repairs. There are currently three applications in Carlisle, two of which will most likely be approved. Habitat also is working with a third Carlisle household on its "Brushed With Kindness" home-painting program. This program provides volunteer labor and discounted paint primarily to seniors, who meet Habitat's income guidelines. The Greater Lowell Habitat for Humanity would like to work in every town in its region.

**Council on Aging Resource Guide:** This online and paper resource guide is currently under development. Mrs. Barnett has expanded the housing section to include information on regional affordable housing (privately and publicly managed) opportunities and contact information; housing legal services; Massachusetts state senior real estate tax circuit relief; and housing-related services offered by the Town of Carlisle.

**Mill Cities Community Investments:** Mrs. Barnett shared a press release from the Mill Cities Community Investments on its mortgage foreclosure loan program that offers short-term, no-interest loans of up to \$20,000 per household, to unemployed/underemployed households. She noted that this program is the result of the generosity of a local Carlisle family and is available to Carlisle households as well as those in Acton, Chelmsford, Dracut, Lowell, Tyngsborough, and Westford, as well as those from other areas in need. All mortgage foreclosure loan recipients are required to work with the Coalition for a Better Acre Home Preservation Center and also to attend a financial management workshop.

**Minutes approved:** On a motion made by Mr. Pearlman and seconded by Mr. Brown, the board voted 4-0 to approve the minutes of the January 12 meeting. On a motion made by Mr. Pearlman and seconded by Mr. Brown, the board voted 4-0 to approve the minutes of the January 26 meeting.

Next meeting: Tuesday, February 28.

**Meeting adjourned:** On a motion made by Brown and seconded by Pearlman, it was voted 4-0 to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.